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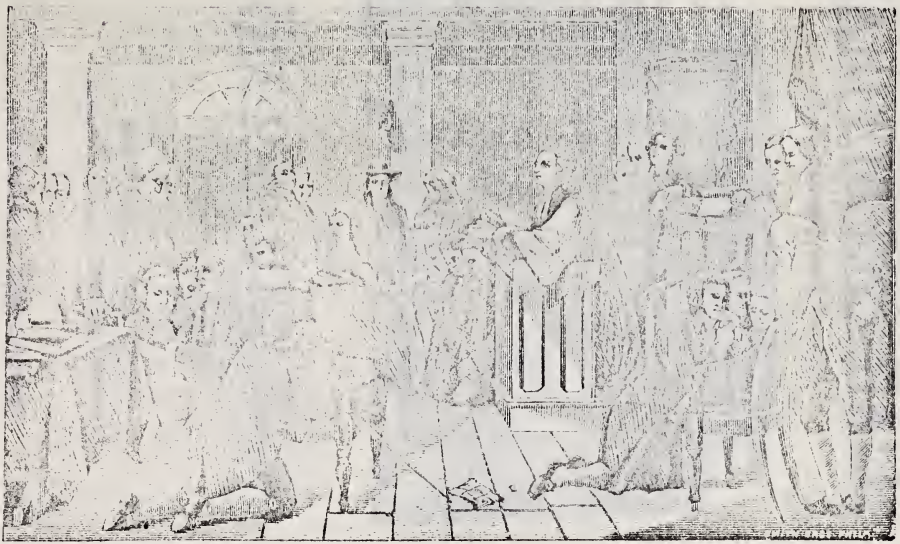

CARPENTERS' HALL,

(Chestnut Street, bet. 3rd and 4th.)

AND ITS

HISTORIC MEMORIES.

BY RICHARD K. BETTS.

REVISED EDITION.

(One Hundred and Thirtieth Thousand.)

PUBLISHED BY THE COMPANY.

1895.

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TESTIMONIAL.

Resolved, *That the thanks of the Carpenters' Company of the City and County of Philadelphia, be and are hereby tendered to*

RICHARD K. BETTS,

For compiling the excellent pamphlet for distribution to our Centennial visitors.

THOS. F. SHUSTER,
President.

WALTER ALLISON,
Vice President.

GEO. WATSON,
Secretary.

PHILADELPHIA,
January 17th, 1877.

Carpenters' Hall

AND ITS

Historic Memories.

When we survey this quaint old building, situated at the head of Carpenters' Court, on Chestnut street, between Third and Fourth streets, and consider that when erected it stood beyond the outskirts of the city, we cannot but admire the public spirit of its founders.

The Carpenters' Company, of the City and County of Philadelphia, is one of the oldest Associations of Pennsylvania, being instituted about forty years after the settlement of the province by William Penn, and maintaining an uninterrupted existence from the year 1724. Among its early members were many prominent in colonial history, and whose architectural tastes are impressed upon buildings that yet remain, memorials of that early day.

The object of the Association, as expressed in its Act of Incorporation, was to obtain instruction

in the science of architecture and to assist such of its members as should by accident be in need of support, and of the widows and minor children of such members. Yet matters pertaining to their business as Carpenters held an important place with them, as is evident by the establishment of a "Book of Prices" for the valuation of carpenter's work, "on the most equitable principles," so "that the workmen should have a fair recompense for their labor, and the owner receive the worth of his money." This system was declared to be "not inferior to any other in use in any city in his Majesty's dominions," and which is retained at the present time. It was not a sliding scale of prices, to which each member was bound to conform, but fixed and unvarying. All carpenters were at liberty to work at such discounts off, or per cent. on, as they might agree to with their employers, and as changes in the wages of workmen might necessitate. In its internal workings, the Company is in as active, vigorous life, as at any former period. It is "not beneficial, but benevolent." No one but a "Master Carpenter following the business" is eligible to membership. Any member, who through age or accident is incapacitated to support himself, or the widow of any member left without adequate means for her support, is placed upon the "list of annuitants," and

receives a "quarterly allowance" during life. A prudent care over its investments, and economical administrators of its estate has made its funds more than ample for its most benevolent action in these respects.

James Portius, whom William Penn induced to come to his new city to "design and execute his proprietary buildings" was among the most active of its founders, being himself a member of "The Worshipful Company of Carpenters of London," founded in 1477. The armorial ensigna of this company are identical with those of that ancient body, the officers bore the same designations, and its declared objects, ceremonials and privileges were in futherance of the same ideas. At his death in 1736, he gave his choice collections of architectural works to his fellow members; laying the foundation of their present valuable library.

The original "entrance money," four pounds sterling, led to the formation of rival associations, at a less fee of admission; those, possessing inherent strength, soon saw their mistake, and "The Second Carpenters' Company" united with "their elder brethren" in 1752. The "Friendship Carpenters' Company" after several years negotiation were united with "their elder brethren" in 1786, each member paying into the funds the "original entrance money."

The officers consisted of a Master, Assistants, and Wardens, and the meetings were occasionally held at their houses, but most generally at the "Masters," where the books belonging to their library were deposited. The records show an early attention to the erection of a Hall, but it was not until after an existence of forty years that these efforts were crowned with success.

The Hall was erected in 1770, amid the excitement in the public mind occasioned by the persistent attempt of the "Mother country" to "bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever," which resulted in a general demand for a union of the colonies.

The State House being used by the existing government, the Hall of the Company became the great centre of the gatherings of our patriotic citizens, whether to petition for a redress of grievances, or for the assertion of their rights. Almost all the "Town Meetings" of that eventful period were held on the lawn in front or within its walls. It began thus early to be used for civil purposes. The "town meeting" of 1774, demanding the convening of the Assembly, met therein, and sent therefrom their committee to Governor Penn, whose reply was read on their return that "he saw no necessity for calling the Assembly together," which was undauntedly met by the appointment

of another deputation to "wait on the speaker of the Assembly and require a positive answer whether he would do it or not."

Among the early events in the history of Carpenters' Hall, were the memorable sessions of the "Committee of the City and County of Philadelphia," to initiate measures for calling a Provincial conference—to effect which an invitation was extended to the various counties of the Province, to meet the Philadelphia Committee in conference on the 15th July then next following. On FOURTH OF JULY, (by a singular coincidence) 1774, the latter appointed a sub-committee to prepare "instructions," which the then great leader of Constitutional Rights, John Dickinson, thought "a duty, in order to be ready for the Provincial Committee when it should meet." This great "Provincial Committee," (so it was styled), pursuant to the call referred to, also met at Carpenters' Hall, and remained in session there till its important and effective labors were completed, July 22d, 1774. Its chairman was Thomas Willing; clerk, Charles Thomson. The members were from—

Philadelphia.—John Dickinson, Peter Chevalier, Edward Pennington, Thomas Wharton, John Cox, Joseph Reed, Thomas Wharton, Jr., Samuel Erwin, Thomas Fitzsimmons, Dr. William Smith, Isaac Howell, Adam Hubley, George Schlosser, Samuel Miles, Thomas Mifflin, Christopher Ludwick, Joseph Moulder, Anthony

Morris, Jr., George Gray, John Nixon, Jacob Barge, Thomas Penrose, John M. Nesbit, Jonathan B. Smith, James Mease, Thomas Barclay, Benjamin Marshall, Samuel Howell, William Moulder, John Roberts, John Bayard, William Rush.

Bucks.—John Kidd, Henry Wynkoop, Joseph Kirkbride, John Wilkinson, James Wallace.

Chester.—Fran. Richardson, Elisha Price, John Hart, Anthony Wayne, Hugh Lloyd, John Sellers, Francis Johnson, Richard Reiley.

Lancaster.—George Ross, James Webb, Joseph Ferree, Matthias Slough, Emmanuel Carpenter, William Atlee, Alexander Lowrey, Moses Erwin.

York.—James Smith, Joseph Donaldson, Thomas Hartley.

Cumberland.—James Wilson, Robert Magaw, William Ervine.

Berks.—Edward Biddle, Daniel Brodhead, Jonathan Potts, Thomas Dundas, Christopher Schultz.

Northampton.—William Edmunds, Peter Keichlein, John Okeley, Jacob Arndt.

Northumberland.—William Scull, Samuel Hunter.

Bedford.—George Woods.

Westmoreland.—Robert Hannah, James Carrett.

This list is given, since it is rarely to be met with, and includes the names of those who formed the *second* link (the Non-Importation Resolutions of 1765, of the merchants of Philadelphia, being the *first*) in the local efforts to assert Constitutional rights. This committee, "in a body, waited upon the Assembly then sitting" at the State House, and presented the "Instructions" to appoint delegates to represent Pennsylvania in the intended Congress, and to require them, for and on behalf of the citizens of this Province "strenuously to

exert themselves to obtain a renunciation on the part of Great Britain of all powers of internal legislation for America, or of imposing taxes, &c., and a repeal of every statute affecting the Province of Massachusetts Bay, passed in the last session of Parliament."

These "Instructions," with the argumentative part upon which they were predicated, were esteemed so admirable as to elicit a formal vote of thanks to their author, John Dickinson, rendered publicly from the chair, "for the application of his eminent abilities to the service of his country."

The Assembly, by vote the day following, complied with these instructions, and appointed delegates to the "First American Congress."

It has been asked, why did these most important conferences hold their sessions in Carpenter's Hall? Why did Congress meet there instead of the State House? It was well understood in 1774, the Governor feared the effect of the patriotic movements upon his interests in the Province, and his influence and authority were exercised in opposition to them. We cannot enter into the feelings of these patriotic men as they stood with their lives in their hands. John Dickinson, the great leader and advocate of Constitutional rights, was appealed to by his friends to pause; it was confidently asserted, "you will

be hanged, your estate will be forfeited and confiscated, you will leave your amiable wife a widow, and your charming children orphans, beggars, infamous, because of your doings." When the use of Carpenter's Hall was asked for, the Company was convened to consider it, and the minutes of that meeting show that they felt the responsibility of their doings. The *Royalist* warned them of the confiscation of their Hall, and "that their necks might be inconveniently lengthened." The names of all present were carefully kept off the record, and it simply says "on the question being put, 'shall they be allowed to meet here?' voted that they shall." It was not until Governor Penn fully realized that the sceptre of power had already slidden from his grasp, and from motives of policy that he consented to be the bearer of the petition of Congress to the King. In his examination before the House of Lords, Nov. 10, 1775, in which he is pleased to style himself "the bearer of an olive branch" from America, he clearly manifests his fear that the Americans would adopt "the desperate resolution of calling in the aid of foreign assistance." After he sailed for England, there was no difficulty in using the State House.

In his examination before the House of Lords, the queries were put by the Duke of Richmond. Among the queries and replies were:—

Was he personally acquainted with all the members of Congress?

He was personally acquainted with them.

In what estimation were the Congress held?

In the highest veneration imaginable by all ranks and orders of men.

Was an implicit obedience rendered to the resolves of Congress?

He believed that was the case.

How many men had been raised in the province of Pennsylvania?

Twenty thousand effective men.

Of what rank, quality or condition were they?

Men of the most respectable character in the province.

Were they capable of making gunpowder?

They perfectly understood it.

Could they make saltpetre?

It was done with success.

Were the Americans expert in shipbuilding?

More so than the Europeans.

Did the witness think that the language of Congress expressed the sense of the people?

As far as Pennsylvania was concerned he was certain it was the case.

Did the Delegates to Congress fully represent the wishes of the people?

He had no doubt of it.

In case a formidable force was sent to America did the witness imagine there were many who would openly submit to the authority of Parliament?

The number would be too few to be of any consequence.

The members of Congress gathered at the Merchants Coffee House on Second street above Walnut, and on the morning of the 5th of September, 1774, walked in a body to Carpenters' Hall, the scene of their future deliberations, and "conscious of the impending perils of the movement," resolved "that all their deliberations should be kept inviolably secret," except such as they should resolve to publish. It was said of this Congress that "it is the grandest and most important assembly ever held in America, and that the *all* of America is entrusted to it and depends upon it. A body of greater men, of purer impulses, of nobler aims, or devoted patriotism, never met together or crowned a nation's annals.

A distinguished Frenchman said: "With what grandeur, with what enthusiasm should I not speak of those generous men, who erected this grand edifice; by their patience, their wisdom, and their courage; the actors in this affecting scene. Their names shall be transmitted by a happier pen than mine. In remembering them

shall the friend of freedom feel his heart palpitate with joy. Heroic country! My last breath shall be to Heaven an ejaculation for thy posterity."

Thus, in Carpenters' Hall, began that series of deliberations which resulted on the 4th of July, 1776, in declaring the colonies "free and independent." Peyton Randolph was elected President, and Charles Thomson, though not a member of Congress, because of his acknowledged ability, was chosen Secretary. He held that position in the Assembly of Pennsylvania. At the passage of the Stamp Act, Franklin, who was agent for the colony, wrote from London, detailing its provisions, closed his letter with "The sun of Liberty is set, you must light up the candles of industry and economy." Thomson evinced his patriotic devotion and far-seeing vision by declaring, in reply, "Be assured, my dear sir, that we shall light up torches of quite another sort."

The members of this Congress were from—

New Hampshire.—John Sullivan, Nathaniel Folsom.

Massachusetts.—Thomas Cushing, Samuel Adams, John Adams, Robert Treat Paine.

Rhode Island.—Stephen Hopkins, Samuel Ward.

Connecticut.—Eliphalet Dyer, Roger Sherman, Silas Deane.

New York.—Isaac Law, John Alsop, John Jay, James Duane, William Floyd, Henry Wisner, S. Boerum, Philip Livingston.

New Jersey.—James Kinsey, William Livingston, Stephen Crane, Richard Smith, John De Hart.

Pennsylvania.—Joseph Galloway, John Dickinson, Charles Humphreys, Thomas Mifflin, Edward Biddle, John Morton, George Ross.

Delaware.—Cæsar Rodney, Thomas McKean, George Read.

Maryland.—Robert Goldsborough, Matthew Tilghman, Thomas Johnson, William Paca, Samuel Chase.

Virginia.—Peyton Randolph, Richard Henry Lee, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison, Edmund Pendleton.

North Carolina.—William Hooper, Joseph Hewes, Richard Caswell.

South Carolina.—Henry Middleton, Thomas Lynch, Christopher Gadsen, John Rutledge, Edward Rutledge.

The chairs occupied by the officers of this Congress still stand upon the platform, and those in which Washington and his compeers sat are around the Speaker's desk. The first question was "how shall we vote?" The larger colonies were unwilling to be on an equality with the smaller ones. Major Sullivan, of Rhode Island, said "a little colony has its all at stake as well as a large one." Lynch said "it ought to be a compound of property and numbers." Rutledge said "we have no legal authority, our constituents are not bound by our acts." Lee observed "we are not provided with materials to decide." Gadsen said, "I cannot see any way of voting but by colonies." Ward said, "there are a great number of counties in Virginia, very unequal in wealth and numbers, yet each sends two representatives." Pendleton thought "if a com-

mittee cannot ascertain the weight of the Colonies, Congress can take steps to procure evidence." Jay remarked "he was in favor of giving Virginia her full weight."

It had been intimated that "Virginia will never consent to waive her full representations," and if denied it, "she would be seen no more in that Congress." On no one thing did they seem to agree; some were willing to acknowledge the right of Great Britain to regulate trade; others denied all right to legislate for America; some were willing to pay for the tea destroyed; others said that was to yield the point entirely; one was defiant, another willing to conciliate. Gadsen desired independence. Washington believed that "no reflecting mind looked forward to such a thing." With this diversity of sentiment, Congress adjourned its first day's session. The next day it was opened by reading the preliminary minutes. A silence ensued as of the stillness of death. The patriots sat side by side, and face to face, until that stillness became oppressive. The seeming irreconcilable differences of the previous day, filled their hearts with gloomy forebodings that they were to be separated without accomplishing any one object for which they had met, and with such separation, vanished all available struggles for the rights of the Colonies. The fate of human-

ity for generations to come, the hopes of the patriot and statesman were in the doubtful balance; each heart was too full for utterance, when Patrick Henry slowly arose, in a far off part of the Hall, and hesitatingly broke the silence. He calmly reviewed the wrongs of his country, until warming with his subject, his cheek glowed, his eye flashed, and his voice, rich and strong, rang through and filled the Hall. He counselled a union for general defence, and went beyond the utterances of Gadsen: he said, "this is but the first general Congress and no former one can be a precedent, we shall have occasion for more Congresses—Government is dissolved. Fleets and armies and the present state of things show that government is dissolved. Where are your landmarks? your boundaries of colonies? We are in a state of nature, sir, all lines are gone, and all America is one mass, the distinction between Virginians, Pennsylvanians, New Yorkers and New Englanders are no more. I am not a Virginian, but an American."

Thomas Cushing immediately proposed that Congress should be opened with prayer. Jay, of New York, and Rutledge, of South Carolina, opposed it, because "we were so divided in religious sentiment, some Episcopalians, some Quakers, some Baptists, some Independents, some Catholics.

some Presbyterians, and some Congregationalists, that we could not join in the same kind of worship." Samuel Adams immediately rose and said, "I am no bigot, I can hear a prayer from any man of piety and virtue who is at the same time a friend to his country. I am a stranger in Philadelphia, but have heard that Mr. Duche, an Episcopalian clergyman of this city deserves that character. I move that he may be requested to read prayers to Congress to-morrow morning." The motion was carried affirmatively. President Randolph waited upon him, and received the assurance that "if health permitted he would gladly accede to the wishes of Congress." The next morning attended by his clerk, he entered the hall, read prayers in the established form, and the psalter for that day, (which was the 35th Psalm) and unexpectedly to every one broke forth into extempore prayer, with such ardor, such fervor, such pathos, and in language so elegant and sublime: praying for America, for Congress, for the Province of Massachusetts Bay, and especially for the town of Boston." This was the morning that Congress was informed of the cannonade of Boston.

It was a scene worthy of the painter's art. Washington was kneeling there, and Henry, Randolph, Rutledge, Lee, and Jay and by their sides,

stood, bowed in reverence, the Puritan patriots of New England, who, at that moment had reason to believe that an armed soldiery were wasting their humble households; and who can realize the emotions with which they turned imploringly to Heaven for Divine interposition and aid. "It was," says a letter written on the 16th instant, "enough to melt a heart of stone, I never saw a greater effect upon an audience, it filled the bosom of every man present. I saw the tears gush into the eyes of the old grave pacific Quakers of Philadelphia."

It is cause of deep regret that no memorandum of this prayer was taken, and that we are indebted to the letters quoted above for all we know of it. The printed prayer sold to the public as the "First prayer," was never delivered in Carpenters' Hall, but before a succeeding Congress, and after there was an army "in the field." Congress resolved that each colony should have one vote.

One of the memorable resolves of that Congress was an address to the people of Great Britian, adopted October 21st, 1774, in which they say: "But if you are determined that your ministers shall wantonly sport with the rights of mankind—if neither the voice of Justice, the dictates of the Law, the principles of the Constitution, or the suggestions of humanity, can restrain your

hands from shedding human blood in such an impious cause; we must then tell you, that we will never submit to be hewers of wood, or drawers of water for any ministry or nation in the world."

The tone of manly energy which characterized the papers put forth by this Congress, drew this acknowledgment from a distinguished member of the British Parliament. "When your lordships have perused the papers transmitted to us from America; when you consider the dignity, the firmness, and the wisdom with which the Americans have acted, you cannot but respect their cause. History, my lords, has been my favorite study; and, in the celebrated writings of antiquity, I have often admired the patriotism of Greece and Rome; but, my lords, I must declare and avow that in the master states of the world, I know not the people nor the senate, who, in such a complication of difficult circumstances, can stand in preference to the delegates of America, assembled in general Congress at Philadelphia. I trust that it is obvious to your lordships, that all attempts to impose servitude on such men, to establish despotism over such a mighty continental nation, must be vain, must be futile."

In an address to the inhabitants of the Colonies, of the same date, they say: "But we think ourselves bound in duty to observe to you, that the

schemes agitated against these Colonies have been so conducted as to render it prudent that you should extend your views to mournful events, and be, in all respects, prepared for any contingency. Above all things, we earnestly entreat you, with devotion of spirit, penitence of heart, and amendment of life, to humble yourselves and implore the favor of Almighty God; and we fervently beseech his Divine goodness to take you into his gracious protection."

On the 20th of October, they adopted resolutions which were virtually the commencement of the American union, they were signed on a table in the Hall by all the delegates for themselves and their constituents. They say: "We do for ourselves and the inhabitants of the several colonies whom we represent, firmly agree and associate, under the sacred ties of virtue, honor and love of country." The resolution bound them not to import, purchase, or consume the products of Great Britain until the obnoxious acts of Parliament were repealed; and directing the appointment of "a committee in every county, city and town by those who are qualified to vote for representatives in the Legislature," that persons who should "violate the resolutions might be publicly known and universally contemned as enemies of American liberty." Though these resolutions

possessed no legal force, yet never were laws more faithfully observed.

It is worthy of note that the Bill of Rights adopted by *this* Congress, and their summary of the violations of those rights were, two years afterward recapitulated in the Declaration of Independence.

There was a chivalrous disregard of self, in the prompt and energetic approbation of the measures of Massachusetts, which history rarely discloses among a temperate and calculating people; and in approval of the resolutions of the County of Suffolk, "that no obedience was due from that province to such acts, but should be rejected as the attempt of a wicked administration to enslave America."

In Carpenters' Hall, also, met on 18th of June, 1776, a convention which exercised a controlling influence on the question of *Independence.*

The Assembly of Pennsylvania had appointed their delegates under the following "instructions:"

"We strictly enjoin you, that you, on behalf of this Colony, desist from and utterly reject, any proposition, should such be made, that may cause, or lead to a separation from our Mother Country or a change in the form of government." Hence the delegates of Pennsylvania did not give their votes in Congress "for establishing government

throughout the continent on the authority of the people only," which Congress had recommended on the 15th of May, preceding.

Richard Henry Lee, had, on the 7th of June, introduced his celebrated resolutions for a separation, and the Pennsylvania delegation were under these instructions bound to oppose them. This "Provincial Conference" met. It was composed of representatives from all the counties of the Province, and was presided over by Thomas McKean; it had as members, Benjamin Franklin, Benjamin Rush, Jona. B. Smith, Henry Wynkoop, James Smith, Alexander Lowry, Joseph Heister, John Creigh, and some ninety others.

This Provincial Conference resolved that the present government of the Province was not competent for the exigencies of our affairs.

That the present House of Assembly was not elected for the purpose of forming a new government.

That the present House of Assembly, not having the authority of the people for that purpose, cannot proceed without assuming arbitrary powers.

That a Provincial Convention be held for the express purpose of forming a government in the Province, on the authority of the people only.

That we will support the measures now adopted

at all hazards, be the consequences what they may.

Besides complying with the purposes for which they had been assembled, they patriotically determined to act for their constituents.

On Sunday, the 23d of June, 1776, a committee, consisting of Dr. Benjamin Rush, Col. Joseph Small, and Col. Thomas McKean, were appointed to draft a resolution declaring the sense of the Conference with respect to the independence of the Province from the crown of Great Britain, and to report next morning.

On Monday morning, the 24th of June, the Committee brought in a draft of a Declaration of Independence for the Colony of Pennsylvania, which was read by special order, and being fully considered was unanimously agreed to, in the following words:

WHEREAS, George the III, King of Great Britain, &c., in violation of the principles of the British Constitution, and of the laws of justice and humanity, hath, by an accumulation of oppressions unparalled in history, excluded the inhabitants of this, with the other Colonies, from his protection.

AND WHEREAS, He hath no regard to our numerous and dutiful petitions for a redress of our complicated grievances, but hath lately purchased foreign troops to assist in enslaving us, and hath excited the savages of this country to carry on a war against us, and also the negroes to imbue their hands in the blood of their masters, in a manner unpractised by civilized nations, and hath lately insulted our calamities by declaring that he will show us no mercy until he hath reduced us.

And whereas, The obligations of allegiance, being reciprocal between a king and his subjects, are now dissolved, on the side of the Colonists, by the despotism of the said king, in as much that it now appears that loyalty to him is treason against the people of this country.

And whereas, Not only the Parliament, but there is reason to believe many of the people of Great Britain, have connived at the aforesaid arbitrary and unjust proceedings against us.

And whereas, The public virtue of the Colony so essential to its liberty and happiness, must be endangered by a future political union with or dependence upon a crown and nation so lost to justice, patriotism, and magnanimity. We, the deputies of the people of Pennsylvania, assembled in full Provincial Conference for forming a plan for executing the resolve of Congress of the 15th of May last, for suppressing all authority in this province derived from the crown of Great Britain, and for establishing a government on the authority of the people only, now, in this public manner, in behalf of ourselves, and with the approbation, consent, and authority of our constituents, unanimously declare our willingness to concur in a vote of Congress declaring the United Colonies Free and Independent States, provided the forming the government and the regulation of the internal affairs of this Colony be always reserved to the people of this Colony; and we do further call upon the nations of Europe, and appeal to the Great Arbiter and governor of the empires of this world, to witness for us, that this Declaration Act does not originate in ambition or in an impatience of lawful authority, but that we were driven to it in obedience to the first principles of nature, by the oppressions and cruelties of the aforesaid king and Parliament of Great Britain, as the only possible measure that was left us to preserve and establish our liberties and to transmit them inviolate to our posterity.

It was signed by eighty-five deputies, and delivered by their President to Congress. They also patriotically determined to act for their constitu

ents, and to instruct the Pennsylvania delegates in Congress to concur in declaring the United Colonies Free and Independent States, and to disregard "instructions" from the Assembly, which resolution they also formerly transmitted to Congress. In prompt response to the call of this Conference, assembled the "Convention of 1776" to frame a Constitution for the Independent State of Pennsylvania.

Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence on the 4th of July, and on the 15th of the same month this convention in Carpenters' Hall ratified the action of Congress, and adopted a constitution which served as the fundamental law of the land throughout the Revolution, and until after the adoption of the Constitution of the United States. In an address to his fellow citizens on the action of this convention, the chairman, Thomas McKean, said: "It is now in your power to immortalize your names by mingling your achievements with the events of the year 1776—a year which we hope will be famed in the annals of history to the end of time, for establishing upon a lasting foundation the liberation of one quarter of the globe." Thus, in Carpenters' Hall, was prefigured the great Magna Charta of our liberties.

The use of Carpenters' Hall for the popular

cause was almost continuous, and when the next Congress convened at the State House, the Committees of that body and their most important "Committee of Safety" held their secret meetings within its walls. That Congress, though meeting in the State House, assembled in Carpenters' Hall to proceed in a body to the funeral of their deceased President, Peyton Randolph, October, 1775. The Committee in charge of his obsequies placed his remains there for the last sad look of his fellow patriots and friends.

Christopher Marshall, in his diary, under date of October 24th, 1775, says: "Past two, went and met part of Committee at Coffee House, and from thence went in a body to Carpenters' Hall, in order to attend the funeral of Peyton Randolph, (the first President of the first Continental Congress), who had departed this life suddenly after dinner, last First day, at the country house of Richard Hill: then proceeded to Christ Church, where a sermon was preached by Jacob Duche; then to Christ Church burial ground.

Among those whose manhood early appeared in a protest against the Church and State government of the early New England Colonies were the Baptists. Holding among themselves all that was great in Puritanism, a manly endurance of persecution, they submitted to imprisonment and death.

When the opposition to Great Britain stirred up a manly advocacy of liberty in the land, Mr. Backus, the agent of the "Warren Baptist Association," and the suffering churches he represented, thought it a proper opportunity to appeal to Congress for relief in their afflictions. He, therefore, came to Philadelphia in the early fall of 1774. The Philadelphia Baptist Association was in session; he laid before them a statement of the sufferings of their New England brethren. He and James Manning prepared a memorial to lay before Congress, and the support and assistance of all the sects not dominant in those Provinces solicited. To this responded particularly the Quakers, who, although controlling Pennsylvania, were especially obnoxious to the New Englanders. A conference between them and the Baptist Committee was held at the office of Robert Strettle Jones, a distinguished lawyer of the day.

It was finally concluded that before addressing a memorial to Congress a meeting with the delegates from New England should be had, and upon this resulted a session in Carpenters' Hall, on the 14th of October, 1774, a day worthy of commemoration.

All friends of religious liberty, in or out of Congress, were invited. John Adams, surly and indignant, Samuel Adams, Thomas Cushing, and

Robert Treat Paine appeared for Massachusetts. The Catholics of Maryland were represented by Charles Carroll, of Carrolton, and his colleagues. Even cavalier and episcopal Virginia appeared.

From New Jersey, James Kinsey; from Rhode Island, Stephen Hopkins and Samuel Ward; from Pennsylvania, Joseph Galloway and Thomas Mifflin represented the sympathies of their constituents with the motives of the conference. The Quakers were particularly strong in the representation of Israel and James Pemberton, and John Fox, while the Baptists stood forth with the proud representation of President Manning, of Rhode Island College, Robert Strettle Jones, and Mr. Samuel Davis.

The discussion was earnest, the grievances of the Baptists and Friends in Massachusetts were warmly commented on; the conference lasted until after eleven o'clock at night. Manning and Backus presented the cause of their suffering brethren. John Adams, in his diary discourses with the earnestness of the Puritan and the Federalist concerning this conference. Quoting from his diary: "I arose and said that the laws of Massachusetts were the most mild and equitable establishment of religion that was known in the world. That the people of Massachusetts were as religious and conscientious as the people of Pennsylvania; that the very liberty of

conscience which Mr. Pemberton invoked, would make them preserve their laws; that they might as well try to turn the heavenly bodies out of their course, as the people of Massachusetts from their meeting house and Sunday laws." The principal speaker appears to have been Israel Pemberton, the Quaker, who, noting the grievances of his sect and others in Massachusetts Bay, John Adams accuses of Jesuitism. Says Adams: "I responded to him with great heat, not willing to hear my people thus attacked, and declared that in Massachusetts was and ever had been the purest political liberty known."

Then, says a record of the period, up rose Israel Pemberton: "John, John," he said, "dost thou not know of the time when Friends were hung in thy colony, when Baptists were whipped and hung, and finally when Edward Shippen, a great merchant of Boston was publicly whipped because he would not subscribe to the belief of thee and thy fathers, and was driven to the colony of which he afterward became governor? Pray don't urge liberty of conscience in favor of such laws."

The conference ended in nothing at that time, but the struggle for religious liberty thus begun in Carpenters' Hall, was not abandoned or for-

gotten. The Catholics of Maryland, the Friends of Pennsylvania, and the Baptists of Rhode Island and New England never lost sight of it, and the cause grew until its principles were embodied in the Federal compact, and to-day exist in the constitution of every State of the Union but one.*

When the British took possession in 1777, of the city of Philadelphia, a portion of their army was quartered in the Hall, and continued there during the time they occupied the city. The soldiers made a target of the vane on the cupalo, and several holes were drilled through it by their bullets.

The early movement for the encouragement of American industries is identified with Carpenters' Hall. A public meeting of citizens was held at the Hall, and subscriptions made for that object. The following is from the papers of that day:

"The subscribers towards a fund for establishing and carrying on American manufacture of linens, woolens, &c., are requested to meet at Carpenters' Hall, on 5th day next, the 16th inst, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, to consider a plan for carrying the same into execution." They organized. The chairman on taking his seat said: "Poverty, with all its other evils, has joined with it in every part of Europe all the miseries of slavery. America

*On the anniversary of this occasion in 1874, "The Baptist Association" prepared a minute to commemorate these efforts, and a committee with many others repaired to Carpenters' Hall, where, after prayer and singing "My Country 'tis of Thee," they read an account of this meeting where

is now the only asylum for liberty in the whole world. By establishing manufactories we stretch forth a hand from the ark and invite the timid manufacturer to come in. By bringing manufacturers into this land of liberty and plenty, we remove them from the state in which they existed in their own country, and place them in circumstances to enable them to become husbands and fathers, and add to the general tide of human happiness. In closing the imports from Great Britain, the wisdom of Congress cannot be too much admired. A people who are entirely dependent on foreigners for food and clothing must always be subject to them. That poverty, confinement, and death are trifling evils compared with that total depravity of heart which is connected with slavery. By becoming slaves we shall lose every principle of virtue; we shall transfer an unlimited obedience from our Maker to a corrupt majority of the British House of Commons, and shall esteem their crimes the certificate of their divine right to govern us. We shall cease to look upon the Court and Ministry—harpies who hover around the liberties of our country—with detestation; we shall hug our chains and cease to be men."

In 1787 the United States Commissary General of Military Stores occupied the Hall, and from

religious liberty was laid before members of the Congress; then all united in fervent prayer and thanksgiving to Almighty God for what had been accomplished in the past century, and sang the hymn "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

1773 to 1790 the books of the Philadelphia Library, then the nucleus only of the magnificent collection which now exists, were deposited in the second story.

In 1787, sundry deputies of the convention to frame a Constitution for the United States appeared at the State House, but a majority not being present, adjourned from day to day. A quorum having arrived, they held their sessions from that time in "The Carpenters' Hall," where "they deliberated with closed doors, and at the end of four months agreed upon a Constitution for the United States of America," making the Carpenters' Hall memorable both for the first united effort to obtain a redress of grievances from the Mother Country, and the place where the Fathers of the Republic changed by the Constitution a loose league of separate States into a powerful nation.

The Hall has also been largely used for public purposes. During the Revolution it was partly used by the Commissary General of Military Stores, and a temporary building erected by him for a brass foundry and file cutting shop, and at times by the Barrack Master.

In 1791 the first Bank of the United States transacted its banking business there for upwards of six years, and upon their removal to their new banking house (now the Girard Bank), after which

the "Bank of the State of Pennsylvania" occupied it until they erected their banking house on Second street.

The United States occupied it for their Land Office for a short period, when the business of the Custom House was removed to it, and it continued as such about fourteen years, until the incorporation of the second Bank of the United States, when the United States surrendered it by agreement. That institution occupied it until the completion of their own building on Chestnut street (now the Custom House) in 1821.

On the removal of the Bank, the Apprentices' Library had their collection on the second story for about seven years, after which the Franklin Institute occupied the Hall, and held the first exhibition of domestic manufactures ever offered to the American public, in the same Hall where its advocates first assembled more than fifty years previously.

They occupied it about seven years, and on their removal, John Willitts, a popular teacher, taught the higher branches of an English education to large classes. In 1827, it was used for the purposes of public worship by the Society of Friends until the erection of their new meeting-house on Cherry street. After many changes in

its uses it finally became the busy scene of an auction mart.

A visitor in 1829, from Virginia, pens this beautiful tribute: "I write this from the celebrated Carpenters' Hall, a structure that will ever be deemed sacred while national liberty is cherished on earth. It is of brick, surmounted with a low steeple. The lower room in which the First Congress of the Colonies met comprehends the whole area of the building. Above are the committee rooms. These sublime apartments first resounded with the indignant murmurs of our immortal ancestors, sitting in secret consultation upon the wrongs of their countrymen. In this hallowed Hall the august assembly to which they belonged daily convened. The building, it is gratifying to add, still belongs to the Society of Carpenters, who will by no means part with it, or consent to any alterations. It was here that the ground work of our Independence was laid; for here it was, on the 5th of September, 1774, after the attempt to tax the Colonies without their consent, and the perpetration of numerous outrages by the *Regulars* upon the defenceless inhabitants, the sages of America came together to consider of their grievances. Yes! these walls have echoed the inspiring eloquence of Patrick Henry, the greatest orator, in the opinion of Jefferson, that ever lived—the

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very man who gave the first impulse to the ball of our Revolution! In this consecrated apartment in which I am now seated, this unrivalled effort of human intellect was made! I mark it as an epoch of my life. I look upon it as a distinguishing favor that I am permitted to tread the very floor which Henry trod, and to survey the scene which must have been surveyed by him. Oh! that these walls could speak! That the echo which penetrates my soul as I pronounce his name, might again reverberate the thunders of his eloquence! But he has long been gathered to his fathers, and this Hall, with the ancient State House of the '*Old Dominion*,' I fervently hope may exist for ages as the monuments of his glory."

The Convention for a monument to the signers of the Declaration of Independence met and held their deliberations therein

In 1857 the Carpenters' Company, with a reverence for their old Hall, which so well has stood the test of time, withdrew it from the purposes of trade and commerce, and devoted it to their own use, keeping it freely accessible to those who may be disposed to step within its portals, where the nation's greatest men have stood, or from a reverence for the spot where Henry, Hancock, and Adams inspired the delegates of the Colonies with nerve and sinew for the toils of war, and whence

grew all the thunders of the Revolution, where the most momentous issues were decided, and historic incidents cluster in profusion around its early memories. Still, without desiring to shade one feeling of regard for the venerable "Hall of Independence," where the indentures which bound the infant nation to the Mother Country were cancelled, and its bonds burst asunder, and from whence it stepped forth "free and independent among the nations of the earth." Yet, in "Carpenters' Hall" was its first breath of existence, its first buddings into life, and the first outstretching of its strengthening arms, and may it stand in its simple grandeur, sacred as the Birthplace of the Nation, until the name of Liberty shall be lost in the chaos of Time.

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